

# The Pokey Hat

THE POKEY HAT at East Kilbride Arts Centre, for The Scotsman,  
12.7.14

4 stars \*\*\*\*

The Pokey Hat, by contrast, is a short and simple 35-minute show for children about the joys of ice cream, in which the three performers don stripey waistcoats and straw boaters, and make brilliant use of the spaces in and around their ice cream van to reflect on three different ways in which ice cream is bound up with our happiest memories. So there's the scene about playing in the street and running to buy a cone from the van; there's the scene in a traditional Glasgow Italian cafe; and there's the scene on a seaside holiday, doon the watter.

Like Maw Goose, The Pokey Hat slightly abandons its storyline towards the end; there's supposed to be an ice-cream competition afoot, which links only vaguely to the ice-cream stories we've heard. That's a minor hiccup, though, in a show full of lovely songs and gently persuasive writing; and everyone connected with The Pokey Hat – from writer Martin O'Connor and director Clare McGarry to the three-strong cast – can take real pride in a little beauty of a show, that radiates such a powerful and loving sense of social history, in such a small space.